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ABSTRACT

The report describes educational policies of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries in light of socioeconomic trends. It is intended as a guide to educational and economic development for use by educational policy makers. The report is presented in three sections. Section I discusses the present and long-term role of education in the community and in society. Topics discussed include demographic trends such as drop in fertility, regional migration, and foreign workers; changes in educational demand brought about by democratization; and financial, human, and physical resources. Section II predicts the future of education, examines educational policy trends in Europe since World War II, and suggests general policy outlines in response to these trends. Redefinition of the function of education to include more stress on individual development is suggested as one solution to problems of declining enrollment and increased educational costs. Relations between education and working life are also described. Section III summarizes changing patterns in educational growth and demand, relations between education and employment, financial and manpower resources, educational needs, responses of the education system to basic skill development, employment preparation, and recurrent education. (Author/DB)

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EDUCATION POLICIES AND TRENDS

In the context of Social and Economic Development Perspectives

A report by a Group of Experts

SP 010 266

ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was set up under a Convention signed in Paris on 14th December, 1960, which provides that the OECD shall promote policies designed:

— to achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in Member countries, while maintaining financial stability, and thus to contribute to the development of the world economy;

— to contribute to sound economic expansion in Member as well as non-member countries in the process of economic development;

— to contribute to the expansion of world trade on a multilateral, non-discriminatory basis in accordance with international obligations.

The Members of OECD are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

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FOREWORD

by the Secretariat

The report which is contained in the present volume has been prepared by a group of experts set up in 1976 under the work programme of the Education Committee of the OECD. As explained in the Introduction, the purpose of the report is "to identify and set out in a necessarily general (and in part normative) and long-term approach, the main trends and orientations of education policies in Member countries in the light of likely economic and social development prospects".

The background to the decision for the preparation of such a report lay in the observed changes which were taking place in the educational situation in many Member countries, consequent on the slowing down of the rate of overall expansion which had characterised the sixties and early seventies, the impact on education of declining rates of economic growth and persisting high levels of unemployment, and the growing uncertainty among many groups in society as to the future role of education. It was felt that it was opportune to endeavour to assess the long-term consequences which these developments might have for the educational systems of Member countries, identify new opportunities created and new needs to be met as a result of the changing socio-economic context and suggest broad strategies and policy approaches by which education could meet these new challenges.

This task was entrusted to a Group of individuals with direct responsibility for educational policy and planning in their countries. The Group was able to draw on the evidence available in the Secretariat (which will be published separately under the responsibility of the Secretariat), supplemented by more recent data which the Members of the Group were able to bring to bear on their work from their own direct knowledge of their national situations. The Group was anxious to keep its report short and policy-oriented and decided therefore to avoid detailed quantitative presentations in their analysis of trends.

It should be understood that the Members of the Group served in their personal capacities and not as representatives of any Member Government or of the Organisation. Therefore, the views expressed

in the report remain the sole responsibility of the Group and do not commit either the Organisation or its Member countries. The conclusions are designed to call attention to a number of issues of public interest which merit careful consideration both within the Organisation and national administrations.

The Secretariat wishes to record its thanks to the Members of the Group for the effective and speedy way in which they have completed their task.

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INTRODUCTION

Up to the beginning of the seventies, Member countries experienced a very rapid expansion of their education systems which called for the allocation of considerable human and financial resources. This quantitative expansion occurred in conjunction with high rates of economic growth, generating possibilities of skilled employment, increased earnings and rapid social change. It also necessitated significant structural reforms within the educational sector, and major efforts in educational research, development and innovation. In spite of the considerable progress which has been made, educational reform did not fully succeed in meeting all the users' needs while, at the same time, it generated new demands as well as new forms of dissatisfaction; so that in the end it was not always possible to bring about as profound changes in the content of the school system or make of it as effective an instrument for social change as many people had hoped.

In the last few years, overall expansion has slowed down in several countries against a background of growing uncertainty as to the role of education from various groups in society, resistance to change and failure to agree on priorities and on the content of reform. This development has taken place in a context of declining rates of economic growth and high inflation, with increasing curbs on public expenditure and in the rise of real earnings, while unemployment levels have steadily risen and have particularly affected the most vulnerable groups, especially young people.

The effects of this economic situation on the demand for education and on the kind of contribution that the education system could make towards resolving economic and social problems are not easy to perceive. Even on the assumption of an imminent recovery in the growth of production, it is probable that in many Member countries employment difficulties will not abate and that these will necessarily affect the development of education. In addition, the assumptions that may be entertained as to likely changes in modes of living and social patterns will create new opportunities, challenges

and needs to be met, all of which suggest new roles and functions as well as new strategies for education.

The present report is a contribution to possible approaches to this new set of problems. It has been prepared in conjunction with a series of activities conducted by the Secretariat under the Programmes of Work of the Education Committee, CERI and other relevant OECD Committees, particularly those for Manpower and Social Affairs and for Economic Policy. As such, it may also provide ideas and guidelines for the future work of the Organisation in education. Its purpose is to identify and set out, in a necessarily general (and in part normative) and long-term approach, the main trends and orientations of education policies in Member countries in the light of likely economic and social development prospects. It is general in that it does not deal with the special problems of individual countries, but only with the basic issues and common trends emerging in the majority of Member countries. Primarily reflecting the authors' views and opinions, this report could provide a basis of discussion within individual Member countries of their future educational policy options and choices.

Part One discusses the place of education in the community and in society and attempts to indicate, in the light of the authors' appreciation of recent developments and the current situation, the medium and long-term trends in the demographic situation, educational demand, resources and employment. Part Two examines the future role of education and the evolution of educational policy trends and leads to the formulation of a number of general policy options and orientations.

Part One

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN SOCIETY: OVERVIEW OF PRESENT SITUATION AND FUTURE TRENDS

1. TRENDS IN EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT DURING THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS

The educational expansion of the sixties was one of the most visible and significant features in the social development of Member countries. It affected all Member countries, although with fairly noticeable variations; between 1960 and 1970, for example, the annual increase in new enrolments in higher education ranged from 5 to 12 per cent in different countries.

This school and university explosion resulted from the snowball effects of the high post-war economic and population growth, an increased preference and demand for educational services, as well as the political choices made by governments. Causal relationships are difficult to establish statistically. The growth of the demand began in a specific economic and political context (shortage of qualified manpower, economic "miracles" largely due to the richness in the supply of human capital, rapid technological progress, etc.); i.e., the rapid development and changes in production structures created a heavy demand for skilled manpower while the rise in household incomes and government revenue enabled the increasingly high costs to be met. In social terms, the outcome amounted to a major secular change giving rise to new and higher level aspirations among the population as a whole.

The education system became the chosen means of preparation for and access to the new qualified jobs and the corresponding social positions; it was viewed as a means of social mobility and promotion. Pressure from wide sections of the population and the collective benefits attached to educational investment led governments to assign increasing resources to it, augment existing capacity, recruit additional staff and instigate reforms.

At the beginning of the seventies this general upward trend began to slow down in many countries. The number of new students in higher education continued to increase in some countries (Germany, Denmark, Yugoslavia and Japan), but in others, numbers either levelled off or actually declined (France and Sweden) - though this

was sometimes followed by an uptake, particularly for short-cycle courses. To some extent, these fluctuations can be explained by demographic developments (variations in the size of age groups over the years) or by changes in the structure of secondary education and in the entry requirements for higher education. If one eliminates these factors, there remains clear evidence of the changes in individual demand for post-compulsory and higher education being also influenced by the actual or assumed development of occupational and income prospects linked to educational qualifications. These changes often coincided with (and sometimes preceded) an increase in unemployment at all levels, particularly among young people, a decline in employment possibilities and in the financial advantages attached to higher education qualifications. There are clear indications that this situation has affected most strongly young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds, leading as a consequence to changes in the choices and preferences of such people.

The developments outlined above had far-reaching consequences on the functioning of educational institutions and the orientation of education policies, of which the following may very briefly be recalled:

i) The socio-economic context within which educational expansion took place led to particular emphasis being laid simultaneously on two new policy objectives - namely, satisfying the demand for qualified manpower and achieving greater equality of educational opportunity. Defined at first in quantitative terms, these objectives subsequently became increasingly perceived in their structural and qualitative ramifications, under the impetus of pedagogical research and educational innovation and the interest which was brought to bear on the quality and functioning of the educational process.

ii) Educational expansion was nourished by high levels of demand consequent on the rising social and professional expectations and aspirations common to wide sections of the population. Educational policy-makers, though they have relatively little power to change or influence those family and social factors which originate outside the school system, nonetheless greatly facilitated a wider access to education. This process of democratisation opened the way to students with increasingly different origins, behaviour patterns, expectations and aptitudes; but it has also presented the educational system with a new challenge to which it has not found it easy to respond adequately.

iii) Educational expansion made it necessary to mobilise and allocate considerable new amounts of human and financial resources.

In the sixties, public educational expenditure (at current prices) in the OECD area increased by an annual average of 14 per cent, and between 1960 and 1970 the number of teachers rose by about one-third. The very nature of the educational services and their production structure resulted in a rise in unit costs which was relatively faster than the general rise in costs.

iv) Expansion was frequently associated with growing difficulties in the functioning of educational institutions and, according to some, with a relative decline in educational standards. There is, of course, no evidence for this latter assertion and the improvement in teacher-pupil ratios and teachers' qualifications which has been observed in most Member countries provides proof to the contrary; although the fact remains that some groups, particularly in basic education, are not sufficiently motivated and do not fully benefit from the education given. In any case, in most countries the difficulties of managing educational services were aggravated by the rapid extension of these services, which tended to weigh down structures, generate masses of regulations, make decision processes increasingly complex and spread congestion in the service. Partly in response to this situation, attempts were made to introduce greater decentralisation and participation in educational decision making and more suitable management methods. At the same time, an increase in the pressure and powers exercised by teachers', parents' and students' organisations was noted, as well as continued resistance to change from many quarters. The increase in the respective, but often divergent, interests of the various social groups in education and changing attitudes by various groups to change, led to new difficulties in establishing a social consensus on priorities and reform.

v) In its first phase, expansion occurred against a stable background of educational structures. Structural and institutional changes, however, began to be progressively introduced at a frequency and rate which varied from country to country: compulsory schooling was prolonged for one or two years, new forms of education were introduced or extended. Innovations proliferated: new types of schools were set up, new curricula, teaching methods and media were introduced. Structural reforms modified the organisation of courses at secondary and higher levels, though institutional resistance either restricted the scope or attenuated the effects of these reforms. In several cases, the length of time needed for these changes to take place was underestimated as was

the need for effective measures to encourage citizen involvement in the implentation of reforms.

vi) Expansion brought about changes in the relations between education and employment. It helped to raise the general level of education and training of the future active population and to meet the heavy demand for qualified manpower in the sixties - though it did not in many countries lead to the total disappearance of the numbers of young people who leave the educational system without adequate vocational preparation or qualifications. In some circles, on the other hand, the view is generally held that despite all the planning effort that was deployed, educational expansion, particularly of general education, was not always suited to promoting employment opportunities and contributed to the difficulties of entry into working life and access to first employment. Shortages have persisted, while, at certain levels, surpluses have led to difficulties and disappointment for those seeking their first job, including the under-utilisation of qualifications. While not denying that problems of adjustment do arise from educational expansion, these cannot be imputed primarily to education and they certainly do not provide an argument for less education; they are largely due to the difficulty of forecasting trends in the employment structure, to the persistence or emergence of structural unemployment and, since 1973, to strong pressure on the labour market.

vii) Under the impact of expansion, the sixties witnessed the setting up of planning services in most Member countries and the rapid development of educational planning methods, designed to forecast and cope with demand and to direct, to the extent possible, the course of expansion in accordance with policy objectives. In many cases, however, planning presented at first a limited and largely passive character by confining itself primarily to quantifying assumed needs in qualified manpower or by extrapolating enrolment rates; it thus essentially anticipated expansion without having a real influence on it. Policy/planning has progressively become more deliberate and endeavours to influence and orientate demand in the light of structural and qualitative considerations.

The quantitative expansion and its consequences on the functioning of educational systems as outlined above are by and large the result of choices in policies and objectives adopted in the various Member countries. Similarly, the present state of educational systems and future trends in a number of crucial variables affecting their development, are marked by the impact and irreversible

consequences of this general spreading of education, affecting increasingly young people and adults from all layers of society beyond compulsory schooling and bringing about changes in their aptitudes, attitudes and expectations. In conjunction with (but often even irrespective of) educational policy objectives and measures adopted by Member countries, the expansion has from the demand side been motivated by the attractiveness of the labour market for qualification holders. This relationship can be expected to continue and represents one aspect of the dependence of the development of the educational system, or at least of the public response to its offer, on economic development and the employment situation.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND THEIR EFFECT ON EDUCATION

a) Drop in fertility

Present demographic trends show a sharp drop in fertility which began about ten years ago and has become much steeper over the last four or five years. Many population experts consider that this decline cannot continue for long at such a high rate and it may be noted that the birthrate rose in several Member countries in 1975/76. Nevertheless, it is too early to conclude that the trend has changed. In any case, current birthrate forecasts are completely unreliable.

Thus, there is so far no agreement by experts that in most industrialised countries the reproduction rate is moving at more-or-less long-term towards an approximate replacement threshold, i.e. about 2.1 births per woman, allowing for present mortality. Several countries are already below this threshold, but several indices suggest that trends in fertility might be more uneven, with successive fluctuations of variable duration around the replacement threshold; in any case the renewal of the age pyramid from the basis will remain irregular, and this is bound to have effects on the demand for educational services. It is clear, however, that the uncertainty which has always surrounded demographic forecasts has increased in recent years so that such forecasts can no longer provide any valid basis for the planning of future educational provision.

b) Evolution of demographic structures

Whatever the statistical procedure, the decline of fertility necessarily involves further ageing of the total population and of the 15-64 age group. The proportion of this age-group will probably remain almost constant, but the proportion of those above this age group will increase while the proportion of younger people will decrease. It is not really known whether an inactive young person costs the community more or less than an inactive elderly one, and

the answer is doubtless not the same in all countries. In many countries, however, at least part of the cost of the former would presumably be borne by his family and of the latter by social transfers; in such countries, therefore, the collective needs resulting from this trend and the ensuing costs will certainly be affected.

c) Effects on school population

The most obvious effect of the present trends is the decline in the size of school-age groups which in time will have repercussions on the successive study cycles. The fluctuations in the birthrate as well as a new upturn, as is predicted by some, of a hitherto falling trend, give rise to opposite tendencies in each cycle; for instance, enrolments drop in primary schools and rise in the first cycle of secondary schools; then, after a few years, primary enrolments rise and secondary enrolments decline.

This situation obviously raises difficult problems with regard to the availability of teachers and buildings, alternating between surplus and shortage, at least if utilisation factors are assumed to be constant. Furthermore, the average age of teachers is rising whereas their annual renewal rate is tending to fall; the same can be said for facilities.

d) Regional migration

One of the consequences of regional migration is that the population structures in the generating and receiving regions change considerably. On the whole, particularly for primary education, overall demand for personnel and buildings may easily increase even if the number of school enrolments decreases throughout the country. These developments may entail particularly acute problems of capacity, especially in areas undergoing rapid urbanisation. However, the medium term trend is towards a slow-down in regional migration and a reduction in the rate of urbanisation. This is attributed to the draining of rural manpower reserves and is accompanied by an expected fall in investment in the construction of dwellings. On the other hand, efforts to revive population areas which are becoming depleted (rural districts or former city centres) will necessitate the maintenance of educational facilities and an improvement in the quality of the services.

e) Active population

The change in the age structure of the population and the tendency for the population to age means that, under certain assumptions, the burden on active persons may be heavier, especially as the rate of influx into the active population may decline in relation to the rate of exit, either because younger age groups are relatively

smaller or because the economic situation, with its unfavourable impact on employment, encourages young people to prolong their studies. This burden on the active population might at least partially be offset by an increase in the employment of women, which moreover is in line with the general trend of the last few years.

f) Foreign workers

Forecasts of the numbers of foreign workers are particularly unreliable, although the general trend shows either a slowdown or a levelling off, linked with measures for integrating these workers and receiving their families. In many countries the fact that the fertility rates of nationals and foreigners differ greatly means that the share of foreign children in total births is increasing. Since migrants are generally concentrated in certain areas, this situation involves special problems of integration and schooling in the receiving countries and regions, e.g. the teaching of the mother tongue, the training of specialised teachers, facilities and guidance for the children, the occupational and social integration of adolescents, elimination of illiteracy and occupational or other types of training with a view to integrating the adults, etc.

3. TRENDS IN EDUCATIONAL DEMAND

The concept of educational demand remains somewhat vague, its various components are imperfectly understood and its various quantitative and qualitative characteristics hard to single out. It is defined either as the aggregate of private demand resulting from complex individual choices, or as the collective expression of the requirements of groups, social classes or society as a whole. The economic analysis of individual demand in the light of future costs or returns can only explain marginal variations and neglects all non-pecuniary and qualitative aspects (influence of the social environment, for example). It also often ignores the fact that demand is not a static phenomenon and that its size and pattern can be influenced by policy measures and incentives. It is clear from the general diagnosis given below, that, in future, overall demand can be expected to expand, though at less fast rates than during the sixties, and with variations of a cyclical nature staggered according to countries and levels of education. This general evolution is confirmed by the few national forecasts that have been carried out. There will, however, be fairly marked changes in the structure of such demand, as a result of shifts in demand as between various groups in the population, particularly adults, and of policy decisions affecting the development of the various levels and branches of

education. The main trends in the evolution of the school population, as a result of demographic changes and changes in the demand itself, are summed up below:

Future Trends in enrolments by education level

i) At pre-school level (3 to 5/6 years of age), where there is a fairly marked discrepancy between the demand expressed and the available capacity, a substantial increase in enrolment rates is anticipated in all countries (except in those where the rates are already very high, or where this objective is not considered as a priority). This increase reflects at one and the same time the demand for education, social integration and child care, which varies with the child's age, the mother's economic activity, and housing conditions. Very wide disparities exist at this level, to the detriment of the rural areas, though in some cases this also applies to towns. The maintenance of school building facilities and their regrouping may contribute to a noticeable improvement in the situation of rural areas, in which there is often a strong potential demand. Some improvement in the quality of the services (reduction in the pupil/teacher ratio and higher qualifications of staff) is also envisaged.

ii) In compulsory schooling, i.e. primary schools and the first cycle of secondary education, a decline (in some cases quite significant) in the number of pupils is expected in most countries, at least up to the beginning of the eighties. This decline, however, will coincide with more specific demands for personalised, supporting and compensatory education for under-privileged or handicapped pupils and for those who have fallen behind or who have other difficulties. If the hypothesis of a recovery in the birthrate is confirmed, a generalised increase in the number of pupils at this level should be recorded by the mid-eighties.

iii) At non-compulsory upper secondary level, the number of pupils is likely to increase considerably up to 1980-85 (except in countries which have already reached high levels of participation), due to demographic trends and continuing growth in enrolment rates. In some countries, it is expected that there will be increased demand at this level, from young people as well as from adults, for shorter training schemes resulting in professional qualifications rather than longer courses leading to a general diploma. This development may result both from changes in individual choices and the adoption of measures designed to ensure better preparation for working life: efforts to find new forms of transition between

school and working life, to provide initial or further vocational training and to reduce drop-out rates, leading to a greater diversification of the places offered, of training patterns and types of courses, the organisation of alternating and part-time courses, etc. However, such a shift in demand is not very likely to affect countries where general upper secondary education still offers the most attractive choices for further education and professional careers.

iv) It is difficult to assess future trends in the number of students at higher education level. While no country envisages reducing the number of places, changes in educational provision and in admission policies are leading to a broader recruitment which offers new opportunities to the categories of school leavers who had not previously had access to it, as well as to adults. Admission policies are also reflecting changes in the social demand for education which is in turn being influenced in three ways by the employment situation: it is leading to selective abstention in enrolments; there is a prolongation of studies by some of those who are already enrolled; and there is a relative shift of enrolments towards short-cycle and vocational education, at least in some countries.

v) Within each of these two levels of post-compulsory education - and, according to the different systems in various countries, either within or outside the formal educational system - an increase in the demand for adult education is expected over the next few years, as a result of further measures extending new opportunities for adults (educational leave, legislation on training) affecting particularly the unemployed or those in the process of changing their career, but also responding to the growing number of adults who seek further full-time, but particularly part-time, educational courses for general purposes.

4. RESOURCES

Every education system disposes of an ensemble of financial, human and physical resources which are either allocated and usable directly or are available within the community and potentially utilisable. Future resources planning in education will need increasingly to take into account the full range of possibilities opened up by these various categories.

The evaluation of future financial resources - which will largely govern the amount of the other resources and the way they are used - continues to be a vital and particularly delicate problem. Subject

to constraints which are difficult to foresee, their volume depends on future policy decisions taken as a result of a complicated process of reconciling different objectives and preferences. Two alternative concepts are usually put forward, according to whether: (a) education is regarded as a priority objective which cannot be subject to hard-and-fast financial constraints, and demands sustained efforts to improve its quality and increase its resources. This is generally the view held by families, students, teachers' associations and the subsidised private sector; (b) the steady growth in public expenditure on education is disquieting, either because of present budget constraints or because other competing social sectors are now accorded priority. This viewpoint is often expressed within governments. It is a fact that in recent years the evolution of educational expenditure in many countries has been affected by the exigencies of budget policy and by the concern to curb public expenditure and reduce budget deficits.

The Economic Policy Committee has analysed past trends and estimated future public expenditure up to 1985 in 15 Member countries. Their study shows that the proportion of GDP represented by education increased by a one per cent point during the period from 1963 to the early seventies. Ten per cent of this increase may be attributed to the rise in investment expenditure. The rest may be put down to two factors of almost equal weight: the rise in enrolments (especially in higher education) and the increase in the relative price of education, including an increase in real wages of the teaching personnel. Using a number of hypotheses, the study estimates that by 1985 the proportion of GDP represented by traditional expenditure on education would not rise much in real terms above its level of the early seventies: the probable variations in enrolment rates and unit costs should compensate for the negative influence of population trends. However, an increase of a half to one per cent of the GDP might occur as a result of the extension of new programmes or forms of education (pre-school education, compensatory education, recurrent education).(1)

We do not propose to undertake here a detailed critique of the validity of studies of this kind and of the hypotheses on which their conclusions are based. This has been already done by the Education Committee itself, and we would wish to endorse its main conclusions which are as follows:

i) Decisions on education expenditure are not made on purely internal grounds, but in conjunction with parallel decisions made on other competing claims (housing, medical services, etc.).

1) Public Expenditure on Education, OECD, Paris 1976.

ii) Projections are more interesting for their "early warning" function than for any likelihood of being correct predictions.

iii) Though a consolidated data base on past events is obviously welcome, its relation to actual decisions is rather uncertain.

iv) Fluctuations in social demand, since they both influence and are influenced by policy developments, continuously affect decisions on resource allocation.

v) Education is a good in its own right, in other words something to which expenditure may be devoted without any ulterior justification.(1)

This simply confirms the fact that future public expenditure on education is never simply an extrapolation of past trends, but depends to a large extent on the choices of society, or rather of governments acting in its name.

It is at present impossible to estimate the extent of possible future budgetary restrictions and their effect on real unit costs. Mention will be made only of the limits and possible outcome of these restrictions and of the procedures used for allocating and managing resources and likely to reduce the effects of inevitable budget pressures, which will be dealt with in Part Two of this report.

Teaching Resources

The present situation with regard to the teaching force is characterised in many countries by actual or potential surpluses of unknown size. The notion of a "teacher surplus" is in itself not very clear, but there is no doubt that in some countries there is a number, in some cases even a great number, who are trained as teachers but are not offered a job as teachers. There are however sectoral shortages, in spite of the overall surplus. Demographic trends and budgetary cuts have led in many countries to a reduction in new recruitment and in some countries in overall recruitment. They have also contributed in most countries to limiting the number of places being offered in training institutions. This situation is likely to continue for some time. Longer term teacher forecasts are very hazardous because of the changes taking place in teacher tasks and roles, consequent on changes in the educational process itself and on the use of a more diversified range of personnel employed in schools, some of which does not emanate from the professional teaching force as traditionally defined.

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1) Report by the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Education Committee. (Working Document).

5. TRENDS IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The absorption of unemployment and underemployment, and the improvement of prospects of obtaining a first job, are largely governed by the uncertainties about the rate at which the recovery of production will generate new jobs. If the hypotheses in the OECD Growth Scenario to 1980 (published in the Appendix of the OECD Economic Outlook, July 1976) are correct, with an increase in the production rate of some five per cent by 1980, overall unemployment rates will remain at high levels ranging from two to five per cent, according to the country. (This, of course, does not apply to those Member countries which are already pursuing policies of full-employment.) The rate of unemployment will continue to be much higher among young people under the age of 25, who constitute between 20 and 50 per cent of all recorded unemployment. Their difficulties in becoming fully integrated into regular and steady employment, which is partly reflected in their vulnerability to unemployment, is one of the most salient features of the current employment situation.

Until economic and manpower policies succeed in reinstating full employment the education system may have to face an increased demand from some of those who would otherwise have left school and joined the labour force. This increase in demand may not however come from those who are the most vulnerable to employment problems, i.e. those with the lowest levels of instruction or no vocational qualifications. Explanations of how this arises are inadequate, although it seems that one important reason is that pupils do not easily change the courses of study on which they initially embark. These considerations also apply to more highly qualified students and graduates from some branches of higher education who are also facing employment difficulties, especially in finding work related to their qualifications. There is, however, no simple relationship between the rate of unemployment and levels and types of qualification, because many young people also have to face discrimination when seeking a first job; enterprises either hesitate to recruit them or else offer them jobs which young people consider to be unattractive or inconsistent with the qualifications they have acquired. This situation seems to be just as determinant as the factors governing demand. Possible solutions should therefore take into account not only the existing patterns of education and training, but those of employment, recruitment and utilisation of skills as well.

It is not easy to forecast trends in the composition of the labour force by level of education since this varies according to the sector and branch of the economy and because much education has no specific or unique application in employment. A few very general features of medium-term developments may be suggested: as far as the

outflow structure of the education system is concerned, there should be a steady rise in the level of education and qualifications and in many countries a more rapid increase in those with technical and vocational training; however, the reduction in the numbers of young people now leaving the education system without specific occupational qualification will be a long and difficult process and underlines the need for improvement in curricula to facilitate entry into employment. Employers should also be made more aware about the trends in the educational characteristics of the labour force at regional and national levels.

It is even more difficult to project trends in the requirements of the economy for manpower by level of education. In many countries the present patterns of utilisation are influenced by the continued existence of unskilled jobs, on one hand, and the need for highly educated manpower in such activities as the production of investment goods, capital-intensive systems of production, research and development, management and public service, on the other. The overall pattern of employment by education level is not clear, but it is possible that the range is widening and is leading to a growing proportion in the middle range. As far as employment by industry branch is concerned, it is well established that most new employment opportunities will develop in the tertiary sector, the expansion of which - particularly jobs in the public service sector which depend on budget policies - is an essential element in the evolution of employment patterns.

Whether there is a general tendency for the qualifications required in jobs to be upgraded in line with the rapid rise in educational levels is a matter of controversy. While the concept of personal "qualifications" is clear enough, the idea of qualifications required for jobs and the relations between the two are ambiguous, uncertain and ill-defined; the qualifications required vary according to the production structure, the classifications adopted in space and time and the selection and recruitment criteria used by firms, etc. Detailed analysis of job content shows that there is not so much a tendency for the qualifications required to be upgraded as for job qualifications to be changed.

The international division of labour between the OECD and Third World countries, the concentration of enterprises, their multinational character, their location policy as well as manpower policies in industry and the public sector are all factors which explain the change in job qualifications. At longer term, development prospects in this area are even more uncertain in spite of the fact that the pursuit of the objective of a return to full employment is continuously reaffirmed. The nature of socio-economic changes, their impact on

the evolution of jobs and qualifications and the effects of manpower policies, remain largely unknown and difficult to assess.

It is thus the uncertainty about future trends that has given rise to much discussion and speculation about the desirability of profound changes in the structures and levels of education and training, of employment and working conditions of procedures for the transition from education to working life, and the full utilisation of the education and training level of the labour force. Strategies and relevant measures were proposed at the 1976 meeting of the Manpower and Social Affairs Committee at Ministerial Level(1) and were further discussed in the OECD by the Joint Working Party on Education and Working Life. They will be raised in Part Two of the report.

1) Ministers of Labour and the Problems of Employment, OECD, Paris 1976.

Part Two

FUTURE EDUCATIONAL POLICY ORIENTATIONS

Some of the general trends and factors which will influence the orientations of educational development policies in the future may be identified from the foregoing analysis. These orientations cannot be based solely on quantitative forecasts, which remain unreliable and can only be partly used for future policy planning; they are mainly the result of normative policy choices, which of course need to take into account the socio-economic context as a whole and its future evolution.

Education policies are subject to severe constraints which are primarily of a financial and budgetary nature. Although the effects of these restrictions are attenuated by the slower increase in the number of pupils - and its decrease at primary level - it seems unrealistic to expect a reduction in real unit costs. Problems also arise from school shortcomings, including lack of interest and motivation among certain groups of the school population due to a variety of factors such as unsuitable curricula and teaching methods or bleak occupational futures. Despite the considerable ameliorations which have been brought about in such matters as facilities and teacher-pupil ratios, improvements in the quality of the educational service and in the effectiveness of the participation of its users remain a priority. Increased uncertainties and diminished confidence in education raise in a new light the perennial question of choice in objectives and priorities - as well as the compatibility of these objectives - beyond any existing apparent consensus on the general aims of education.

Over the longer term, the development of education is linked to the prospects of economic development and social progress. There is little information for assessing the rhythm and form of future growth and the use that will be made of its results, beyond the widespread feeling that such growth encompasses a wider range of issues than those involved in economic production. It is possible that certain of its probable aspects, such as a slowdown in income growth, increased preference for other services (health, environment, leisure), cost increases etc., will have an impact on the rate of educational

expansion; while a number of other factors, related to changes in living and working styles, and social, economic and cultural development, including the return to full employment, will tend to stimulate the demand for education and widen its functions to enable it to respond to new demands arising from these changes. The following features may be noted:

i) The economic strategy adopted by the OECD Council makes the pursuit of the struggle against inflation a prerequisite for "the sustained economic growth needed to restore higher levels of employment and meet growing economic and social aspirations".(1) At longer term, these perspectives, to the extent that they are followed by individual Member countries, are to be seen in and aligned to the context of a new international division of labour and a change in the trade conditions between Member countries and the Third World countries, one of whose main strengths lies in the production of certain key raw materials. If these orientations were adopted and implemented in Member countries, they should lead to an accentuation of present patterns of economic activity: the industrialised Member countries would tend to give even greater priority to the development of the processing and service sectors using high proportions of highly qualified manpower (skilled workers, technicians and managerial staff) and produce and export knowledge and technology (and its products) in order to restore their balance of payments. Education and research might thereby act as an investment multiplier, partly taking over from physical investment.

ii) Despite the recent situation created by the slow growth in production and income, socio-cultural change is bound to be continued and extended. Social pressures to improve the quality of life and increase social participation will develop further and give rise to new requirements. Increasingly active social policies will have to be devised to meet these requirements by strengthening the factors which generate social well-being and overcome the dysfunctions due to rapid change in urbanisation, working conditions, consumption, leisure, the public services, etc. The extent of these demands is illustrated by the Social Concerns approved by the OECD Council leading to the formulation of a long list of societal objectives.(2) "Individual development through learning" is one of these concerns; it calls for the development of "organised opportunities available to individuals to

1) Press Release, 22nd June, 1976.

2) Measuring Social Well-being, OECD, 1976.

acquire, maintain and develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for their individual development and successful functioning as citizens in their society". Reduction in income disparities and improvement of the quality of life; effective use of free time as a result of longer leisure time and more varied interests; equality of access to available goods and services and, in particular, participation in community and working life - these are all social policy objectives which reflect growing aspirations and whose fulfilment is directly bound up with educational advance and the introduction of imaginative forms of recurrent, lifelong education.

These general postulates call for confirmation or redefinition of the individual and collective functions of education over the next few years. It would be useful therefore to outline these functions before dealing with a number of specific questions on which future policies could focus.

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONS

i) Education is a decisive factor in the development of the intellectual, physical, emotional and moral capacities of individuals. It encourages the child to learn to speak, to reason and to communicate. It generates knowledge and transmits values and ideals. This is a permanent objective of education policy, particularly with regard to basic schooling, and one which has increasing priority, as reflected in the indicators of social well-being adopted by the OECD.

ii) Education should be a powerful means of socialising individuals, even though schools and other educational institutions have found some difficulty in coping with the large social changes which have occurred since the last war. The growing importance attached to communication, learning and participation in social life and work require, however, the strengthening of this function. To achieve this aim education may need help by way of research and support from the authorities so that it may promote understanding and mastery of the various social roles in which the individual has to perform as a citizen, parent, worker, member of a local community or user of community services, of the techniques and tools in current use and of the main social, economic and political mechanisms.

iii) In societies which aim to increase the possibilities of individual choice and eliminate various forms of alienation, constraint, conditioning and pressure to which individuals

are subjected, education must be seen as a means of emancipating the individual. This difficult role presupposes not only changes in educational methods and possibilities for lifelong education, but also the wider development of participation structures and of cultural and information activities, in all of which education should play a major part.

iv) From a more general standpoint, education in increasingly pluralist societies undergoing rapid change, is, through its many external effects, a factor for innovation and for improving the quality of life. It influences standards of information, time allocation, the choice and quality of leisure and enjoyment of culture. It affects the behaviour of groups among themselves or in relation to special groups. It is a factor in reducing social deviation and in curbing certain forms of social degradation - even though its precise influence in this area is frequently difficult to define, operating as it does in conjunction with other social institutions.

v) The expected evolution of production and employment structures together with changes in the international division of labour imply that education will remain an important factor of production. These positive effects upong growth will continue to work through many different channels (better use of resources, advances in research and technology, changes in consumer and broader attitudes, etc.). As the principal means for individuals to acquire skills and training for employment, education remains associated with deeply-felt professional aspirations and therefore with the expectation of economic and social advantages, even if these are becoming more difficult to achieve than in the sixties.

vi) The general rise in the educational levels, capabilities or qualifications of the active population tends to modify the characteristics of manpower supply. Education thus operates on economic life in quantitative terms (for example, by encouraging the creation of jobs), but more particularly in qualitative terms, by bringing about changes in social relationships in enterprises (for example, working conditions and participation), in manpower qualification structures and in criteria for the utilisation of competencies. This development towards the redeployment of skills and the improvement of the working environment will need to be actively pursued in the future, and it is in this sense that education may be said to have a penetrating effect on the economy.

vii) Education, in alternation with other activities, is an important factor in the individual's lifelong allocation of time; it can absorb and regulate fluctuations in manpower supply (provided that it is not used to hide unemployment), offer the unemployed opportunities for individual training and thereby allow for a better use of the resources assigned to income maintenance. Furthermore, education can facilitate the entry into active life or offer a "second chance" to students who left the education system prematurely, through schemes alternating education with employment periods.

viii) Lastly, it will be recalled that educational functions include the transmission (preservation or reproduction) of the values, behaviour and standards of cultural taste peculiar to each society. In a broader sense, education provides the means of continuous development between generations, i.e. of equipping the next generation with full possibilities of developing the knowledge, skills, patterns of behaviour and the aptitudes and ideals required in order that the society in question may function and develop. This is shown as all the more important in the light of the dynamic nature of modern industrialised societies which, more so than in the past, increasingly seek to achieve these objectives through the public systems of education and training.

1. CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Trends in production and employment structures, income levels and life styles justify the assumption that educational needs and demand will be extended and diversified during the next few years. Demand will come from all social and demographic groups. However, little is known of the exact nature and ramifications of this new demand and it is important that serious efforts should be made to define it not only in quantative, but, above all, in qualitative terms (origin, composition, variations). For example, in basic education more information should be available in connection with the expectations of parents (child care, personal fulfilment, acquisition of knowledge and educational standards). Further thinking should be devoted to the implications for the educational system and process of the growing, though still generally underestimated, role of occupational expectations and motivations alongside social status aspirations in the demand of individuals for access to post-compulsory or adult education. A better understanding of the nature of this demand and of the way in which education systems should express it and respond to it is an important prerequisite to new policy directions.

These directions are a matter for the policy options which the authorities in each country will make in the light of their specific objectives, the pressure from users and prospective users of the existing services, the resources available and the satisfaction of employment needs. The following general considerations for the development of the education system are however proposed for discussion:

i) Education can no longer be designed merely to give everyone a minimum of basic knowledge, provide occupational training and select an elite. Increasingly it is directed towards developing the capacities of the individual and preparing him to participate in a range of social and professional activities, while seeking to eliminate the various obstacles to access and attainment.

ii) The new policy objectives are no longer merely concerned with a given phase of existence (childhood, adolescence, youth and early adulthood), but with the individual's complete life cycle. They encompass the needs of all the demographic groups, i.e. of people who will live in the next century and in societies which are as yet difficult to describe. Because of their wide scope, these objectives can only be formulated in the context of long-term strategies and policies and must necessarily be pursued simultaneously.

iii) The continuing development of the education system seems inevitable - a conclusion which stems directly from widely held assumptions as to the role and socio-economic effects of education and the extension and diversification of educational needs and demand. In some countries, this development is being accompanied by increasing efforts on the part of the public authorities (whether central, regional or local) to extend their control over the education system, which is partly a response to the growing political nature which now characterises educational debates in many countries. In other countries, however, the effort is directed towards a greater devolution of the control over education to the institutions and professional organisations or groups directly concerned.

iv) The development of the educational system should be accompanied by a progressive modification in priorities and centres of interest as well as reinforce a number of current orientations: it is no longer primarily a question of global expansion, although at non-compulsory levels the demand for places will continue to rise. An important objective will continue to be to sustain the effort to adjust the various factors of supply (structures, content, methods, management,

relations with the community etc.) to expectations or certain types of demand and reduce the gaps between supply and demand which have occurred during the last few years and reflect the dissatisfaction of users (boredom, drop-outs, etc.). Continued improvement in the quality of the services is a major factor in this development, and calls for action to be taken by the authorities in various fields, e.g. increased flexibility of structures and choices, more effective provision of information and orientation, appropriate financial and other incentives, compensatory education, teacher training, opening up the school to the community, participation, etc.

v) In many Member countries the provision of advanced and higher education - as measured in traditional terms of educational qualifications and meeting manpower requirements - has reached the point where it should be possible to take more account of other needs. These should include giving more attention to that group of young people who fall between school and higher education and giving greater emphasis to ensuring the socialisation and culturisation of all members of the community, and especially to improvements in the provision of special aid to the various groups of the disadvantaged and handicapped. More equality in the opportunity of these groups to learn and to shape their own lives would need to include measures of positive discrimination. The social costs of such special aid for those that need it most are likely to be lower than those caused by the need for later measures of rehabilitation and resocialisation if educational possibilities are not fully utilised.

2. RELATIONS BETWEEN EDUCATION AND WORKING LIFE

The general trend in these relations(1) is primarily towards the rejection of any strategy designed to maintain a close functional interdependence between education and employment. This does not mean that the two systems do not need to be brought closer together, but this can only be done if their distinct attributes and roles are clearly recognised and if they are both seen as evolving systems in dynamic interaction with each other.

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1) These matters have already been dealt with in detail in a number of OECD studies, e.g. The Report on Education and Working Life in Modern Society, the Report of the Joint Working Party on the same subject; and the Reports on Selection and Certification.

A major challenge to policy is to devise measures to lessen the effects of selection, certification and screening in the education system by new flexible and continuous ways of acquiring capitalisable qualifications (e.g. properly coordinated modular units or courses). The selective way these processes have been operating so far tends in fact to make the education system very dependent on manpower demand and at the same time to block access to employment. It rigidly binds the two systems together and makes the function of apprenticeship to civic life dependent on the acquisition of an occupational qualification, frequently unsuitable or never used in practice. It justifies drop-outs and the premature and definite exclusion of large numbers of young people without occupational training, who remain a heavy burden on society. Furthermore, by blocking access to employment, it promotes the use of the "internal"(1) labour market and fosters the questionable ideas of overproduction of graduates, downgrading of jobs and overinvestment in education.

Appropriate strategies to be adopted would tend to give priority - both in education and in working life - to the objective of personal development rather than merely to technical considerations linked to production. In other words, the education system should be designed as an instrument for preparing and adapting individuals continuously to working and civic life rather than to well-defined and predetermined professions; it would tend to become a "support", maintaining a wide range of flexible relations to working life. This concept would be bound up with a policy for changing employment structures, working conditions, methods of recruitment and the utilisation of the knowledge and competences available in the labour force.

Any such strategy would in particular imply a more explicit assumption on the part of public authorities of responsibility for preparing all young people up to the age of legal maturity for their insertion into active life, either in the school system, in working life or combinations of both. It would favour the introduction of effective schemes responsible for "administering" the transition between the education system and employment. It would lead to the continuous extension of skills which at long-term could have a favourable influence on manpower structures and levels of employment, on changes in working conditions and on worker participation. Such a strategy would tend to delay the point of definitive choice by

1) The internal labour market is made up by the set of rules which regulate the access to the different jobs of enterprise, the career of workers, the ways certain adaptations, which are judged to be inevitable, are made: notably the conditions for eventual dismissals. The resource to this market favours internal mobility and promotion and reduces external recruitment and competition.

pupils, increase the possibilities for individual choices and bring selection and competitiveness out of the education system to be resolved on the labour market. However, the problem of access to and the persistence of unskilled jobs will still remain to be resolved.

At medium-term, such a strategy would be influenced by the employment situation. According to the strategy adopted by the Manpower and Social Affairs Committee at Ministerial Level, general and occupational training should be one of the instruments of employment policy, alleviating the social effects of the recession by providing an alternative and more constructive use of time for some of the unemployed or underemployed workers, thus forming a reserve of qualified manpower likely to facilitate economic recovery. It also helps to reduce unemployment by facilitating reconversion and keeping pressure on the labour market within tolerable limits. There is general agreement over the use of the education and training systems as a means of regulating cyclical fluctuations and absorbing unemployment and over the extension of financial incentives to encourage the unemployed to undergo training. From the community's standpoint such action is justified by the high social yield from expenditure on training attributable to a low opportunity cost. From the angle of the individual, it increases chances of re-employment by:

a) encouraging reconversion in branches of the secondary and tertiary sectors likely to create job opportunities;
b) providing training (or pre-training) to persons with no qualifications;
c) improving and supplementing general training by offering a second chance.

In order for these goals to be reached, it is essential to set up substantially realistic and flexible training schemes with well-defined objectives, to be determined in consultation with the users. It would be dangerous to offer artificial or "parking" training schemes so as to hide unemployment among the young and thereby create illusory expectations. Any such use of the education system is doomed to fail; it might in the medium term increase the risks of unemployment of young people and severely endanger the objectives of training policy.

To be effective, education and training measures associated with an active employment policy should be conceived in direct relation to the content and structures of the educational system itself and at the same time be coordinated with parallel measures designed to reduce rigidities in supply, modify employment structures and create new full or part-time jobs. Where increasing higher education output meets with fewer occupational openings of the kind and status

traditionally expected, discussion tends to focus on the problem of graduate unemployment and employment below the traditional level. There is no denying that this is a problem not only of the individuals concerned, but of social policy, since individual frustrations may accumulate to cause social friction. It should be noted that there is evidence in some countries that graduates entering the labour market at so-called "inadequate" jobs manage, in a relatively short period, either to move ahead or to change the attributes and functions of the job itself to make it more satisfying. From a longer-term political view, however - and not only on grounds of social ethics, but also of long-term economic and labour market aspects - the essential concern of policy should be those who are left behind educationally and socially, stigmatised as failures within the educational system and, by means of that negative selection, in their later life and employment chances as well.

3. THE PROBLEM OF RESOURCES

Two concomitant and inter-related issues will be discussed here, against the background of educational budgetary policies outlined in Part One of the report:

a) the fact that rigorously restrictive educational budget policies would be difficult to implement and would have serious and unacceptable effects on educational development;
b) the extent to which improved methods of allocating and managing educational resources as a whole could be envisaged so as to lessen the impact of certain inevitable budgetary pressures - recognising the concern which education policy making has always had for the optimum use of the limited resources available.

The effects of restrictive policies

In the first place, the limits within which severe financial restrictions could be applied are set by the strong rigidity of the public expenditure programmes. This limitation is particularly true of education. Salaries, which account for about 80 per cent of the operational appropriations of the educational system (compared with 60 per cent in other sectors) change under the influence of variables and external economic pressures that are difficult to control. Secondly, in the years to come those responsible for administering the educational system will have on their hands a capital of school buildings and teaching personnel accumulated during the period of past expansion. The facilities created and the teachers recruited with security of tenure in most countries entail a volume of recurrent

expenditure which is difficult to cut down. It is true that a small increase or drop in enrolments in compulsory education will tend to reduce the replacement rate of school premises or the recruitment rate of new teachers and bring down expenditure on equipment and teacher training. It is thought in some countries that savings might also be made on non-pedagogical types of educational expenditure (welfare, research, etc.). Despite the marginal nature of most of this type of possibly reduceable expenditure, its medium and long-term effects would, nonetheless, need to be assessed.

Possibilities of reducing the length of studies and average real costs are regarded in most cases as being slight (although not excluded in certain countries at the higher education level). These costs may well continue to increase not only because of the supply structure and the increase in staff salaries, but also under the pressure of a demand for qualitative improvements in the services.

The quality of the service is closely associated with its real cost. A reduction in costs should have adverse effects on improvements in the quality of education and would jeopardise efforts at renovating education, reducing the number of failures or repeaters and introducing innovation and reform. The Secretariat study on Public Expenditures on Education, to which we have already referred, showed the importance of obtaining supplementary resources for financing new programmes in education (pre-school, compensatory, adult) associated with the major objectives of equal opportunity and personal fulfilment. These are objectives which have been universally approved for some years and very widely accepted, and any restrictive budget policy that seriously hampers their pursuit may give rise to social tensions and, in particular, strain the relations between government, teachers and other users and impede the education of those directly involved, the children.

These effects will of course vary considerably according to the scale of the restrictions, the sectors and the type of expenditure concerned. The present shortage of appropriations (other than for salaries) and of social expenditure may well endanger the quality and social aims of education, seriously disrupt the functioning of schools and universities and jeopardise the schooling of pupils experiencing difficulties and who frequently come from under-privileged homes. It may encourage certain social categories to resort to expensive private establishments with selective entrance requirements, which would be contrary to the public policy objectives for education pursued in the majority of Member countries. The development of technical and scientific courses, which are very costly, might also be affected. A reduction in the number of places or increased selection would force young people and adults to leave the education system; the numbers of unemployed and underemployed who have not

acquired qualifications in the educational system would as a result augment and thus place an additional social and economic burden on the community.

There is a further factor which should be taken into account in discussing the effects of these restrictions. The employment situation and the importance assigned to education and training in manpower policy will help considerably to increase the volume of resources allocated to the various forms of education and training connected with the preparation and utilisation of the labour force, its integration and its adaptation to active life. Not all of these public and private resources will appear in education budgets; a part will be administered by the employment services or directly by enterprises. A more coordinated use of these resources for educational purposes seems essential. This would make it possible for some of the overall expenditure on education to be conceivably redistributed to schemes and sectors concerned with the occupational and technical training of young people and adults, particularly the unemployed. This would reflect a change in priorities and would tend to modify the clientele, functions and internal structure of the education system.

Finally, it should be noted that in the concept of national accounts education is classified as a public or collective consumption, the development of which is at present restrained to the advantage of physical investments. Economic analysis, however, has shown that education is simultaneously consumption and human investment complementary to some physical investments. The inconsistency of these theories and classifications should be underlined as well as the fact that they cannot provide a basis for policy choices.

A search for new possibilities of allocating and using resources

The argument above sets out the limits and risks within which financial constraints can operate. Let us now look at the assumption that the impact of unavoidable financial constraints might be reduced or partly relieved by making better use of the various resources, eliminating waste and controlling the quality of output more effectively. The allocation and management of resources in education cannot, of course, be considered in purely quantitative input/output terms in view of the essential qualitative factors involved, often extremely difficult to evaluate by traditional cost-benefit analysis techniques.(1) However, in some countries, retrenchments and

1) The employment situation and the decline in the social and pecuniary advantages derived from certain diplomas might well induce students to take more account of the cost-benefits of the branch of study they choose. Increased preference for technical and professionally oriented studies might be the outcome of this approach.

increased public concern for greater visibility of the way resources are used have given rise to new pressures for a closer search of means to ensure the best possible allocation of educational resources.

Among such means, attention is given in some countries to the development of cost accounting techniques and their wider application in the educational sector, designed to give decision makers information on cost structure, cost prices, the financial effects of various measures and reforms envisaged and on whether to introduce or discontinue special programmes. In addition, certain traditional budgetary rules are being reconsidered with a view, for example, to achieving greater coordination between the programming of capital expenditure and that of current expenditure, usually handled separately.

In this context it should be noted that people responsible for running the educational system, or its separate parts, have always been faced with the necessity of getting optimal results out of scarce resources, and nothing points towards a basic change in this situation. More insights in the relationships between ends and means in educational undertakings, including the interdependence between investment and running costs, will facilitate more rational decisions in this field. It is simplistic, however, to assume that the introduction of specific costing or accounting techniques, used with more or less success in other fields, will by itself contribute significantly to more rational allocations in education; on the contrary, if such techniques are not handled with care and their limitations fully recognised, they may easily lead to a distortion of educational objectives as well as an undesirable degree of central control. In any case, there will be need for measures to increase participation on the part of the users and give greater autonomy to institutions and local services in the management of resources.

In parallel, greater decentralisation of decisions, particularly in countries with very centralised forms of government, could encourage a more intensive use of the resources of the school environment by intensifying exchanges between the school and the community and extending the services provided by the school. Some savings and greater benefits from the available facilities could be achieved by coordinating the various local and regional services and pooling the resources and expenses of neighbouring educational institutions or of schools and other local social institutions. Such coordination should particularly be envisaged between educational institutions producing closely-related services (e.g. schools and school radio and television services).

In some countries, better use of school time could improve considerably the effectiveness of the amount of resources used; this is a difficult question, but one with considerable implications for the

day-to-day life and ultimate objectives of the school. In such countries, loss of time would be avoided if the organisation of the school timetable were adjusted and pupils' working conditions were adapted to their abilities, age and physiological characteristics. (This should not be misunderstood as advocating pupil streaming; it is simply a plea for less rigidity in the regulations governing the day-to-day functioning of schools which in some countries tend to respond more to organisational and bureaucratic needs rather than those of the children themselves.) Changes in educational content and methods designed to reduce the number of drop-outs and repeaters and militate against passivity, boredom or negative attitudes generally, are likely to enhance the yield from the efforts of pupils and teachers and the productivity of the facilities used.

Possibilities also exist for the redeployment of excess capacity in teachers and equipment which may result as a consequence of fluctuations in enrolments at various levels of education and their cyclical variations at each level. Teachers might be made more easily transferable through in-service training and by broadening the range of their functions. This mobility would, however, come up against the differential structures and specialist nature of the teaching profession and a compartmentalised curriculum. At longer-term, the introduction of a broader and more multi-purpose training policy should make it possible to absorb any excess capacity and facilitate mobility between the various educational levels (or into adult education, socio-cultural activities and schemes concerned with the vocational and social integration of young people). The benefits and savings thus accruing could be set off against the initial investment which will be needed in order to instigate appropriate teacher training and retraining schemes designed to facilitate such teacher mobility. These are important issues for educational policy and planning at all times.

INTRODUCTION

Our principal concern in this report has been to provide a framework within which future directions for educational policy could be discussed, having regard to likely social and economic development perspectives in the OECD countries. Our approach to these problems has been influenced by two general considerations: (a) no valid projections exist as to the precise nature and pattern of the future development of the economies of Member countries which could serve as a guide for the long-term planning of education. In view of these uncertainties, and in spite of the constraints which under current economic prospects will operate in many countries on the development of their educational systems in the years immediately ahead, it is clear that education cannot be expected to adapt to economic cycles and, more particularly, that its long-term development cannot be planned for a perspective other than one of full employment; (b) the higher levels of educational participation and attainment among all groups of the population which have resulted from the massive growth of education in the post-war period represent a major social change of a secular nature; future policies for education have to take account of the consequences and irreversibility of this development.

I. SUMMARY OF TRENDS

A. Changing Patterns in Educational Growth and Demand

Most of those of the Member countries which, in the past, experienced high levels of educational growth, now witness a slowing down in their rate of expansion accompanied by greater diversification of their educational systems. Overall expansion, however, will continue, particularly in those Member countries which are still in the process of development, thereby making it possible to reduce the existing marked disparities in participation rates among social groups.

The fall in the birthrate in many countries since the middle sixties (and, in particular, since 1972) has resulted in a decrease

in enrolments at the primary school level and this will continue until 1980/85, reaching lower and upper secondary levels. It is to some extent compensated by increased demand at pre-school level due to growing enrolment rates. Non-compulsory secondary education, in many countries, can be expected to continue to grow up to the mid-eighties - in some cases notably in the technical and professional branches - and to diversify in a variety of directions in response to the demand from young people between 16 and 19 years of age and also from adults. Beyond that date it will in its turn be affected by the fall in population. At all these levels improvements in the quality of education and in the use of resources in equipment and manpower (e.g. reduction in some countries of the teacher/pupil ratio and of the number of pupils per class) will remain a high priority for educational policy-makers.

In many Member countries, the demand for post-secondary education has stablised or is growing only slightly. This is not unconnected with a decrease in the relative advantages conferred by degrees and similar credentials.

In all Member countries there is a marked increase in the demand for adult education - full-time, but particularly part-time - including courses leading to occupational and technical qualifications.

The result of these changes is to shift emphasis in educational policy making from efforts to meet demand in terms of numbers to increased concern for qualitative considerations. This development is related to the unsteady evolution of enrolments and has consequences for the factors affecting enrolment trends.

B. Relations between Education and Employment

The changes outlined above, especially those touched upon under Section A, cannot be considered simply in terms of educational policy. In many Member countries, along with a levelling off of the demand for higher education, there is considerable youth unemployment concentrated among those young people with low educational attainment or no professional qualifications. A proper understanding of the relationship between these phenomena calls for study which will have to take account of the increasing public concern over the financial needs of education, doubts about the extent to which qualified young people will opt for higher education in the future and uncertainty about future economic prospects. Even though a return to full employment might once more mask many of the problems lying between education and employment it would be a serious mistake to brush them aside. A high proportion of those 15 and 16 year olds leaving education for good at the end of the compulsory period would enter the labour market as unskilled and would thereby present a challenge to educational, employment and social policy generally.

Although there has been some dissatisfaction and restlessness among the better qualified young people over their employment prospects - and this is particularly true of young teachers in some countries at this time - they have nevertheless often had sufficient choice and, perhaps, the social and educational background required to come to terms with their situation. Increasing numbers of young people gaining higher education qualifications may, however, well present short-term social and employment problems even at a time of full employment, which it would be unwise to ignore - though this should not be interpreted as denying the fact that for the individual the more education he has the better are his chances to secure satisfactory employment. Finally, even if economic recovery attains greater momentum, sharpened awareness of the needs in social policy or in ecology would call for increased educational policy concern over disadvantaged groups and new content in education for the preparation of people as responsible citizens.

As a result of past educational expansion, the selection which used to take place in the course of school life will in future take place increasingly at entry into the first job. This may be a healthy development, but its consequences should be noted. The problem of entry into active life, rendered all the more difficult by the shrinkage and segmentation of the labour market, has become the primary preoccupation for young people, calling for precise responses on the part of national authorities and a more socially conscious attitude on the part of employers.

Those Member countries which have been strongly affected by a fall in the birthrate will experience an increased aging of their population. This evolution of the demographic structure will result, on the one hand, in an increase of the ratio of the old non-active to the active population (which could result in an increase of the social burden on the active population) and, on the other hand, in a decline of the rate of entry of young people into the active population in relation to the corresponding rate of exit.

The present state of the economy of many Member countries results in a high level of unemployment among young people, affecting in particular certain groups - unqualified youths, young women, youth in under-privileged regions, young migrants and the handicapped. This segmentation process is likely to increase the share of these specially vulnerable groups in total unemployment. The transition from school to active life is accompanied by risks, difficulties, disappointments and increasing frustration. This position has potentially negative long-term psychological effects upon individuals and might bring in its train undesirable social and political consequences. In response to such a situation, education systems are increasingly led to assume a retentionist function; they should do

this by offering coherent and adequate opportunities for training, often within a recurrent education framework. Training having only a "parking" role is an offence to the young people concerned and a disservice to society. Unless it can provide the student with training for a useful job, and he can see that this is so, he will be encouraged to feel disillusioned, resentful and negative in his attitude towards education and society. On the other hand, nearly any kind of education is preferable to actual unemployment, and the primary policy objective in such a situation should clearly be to provide meaningful education for all young people who want it.

The employment prospects of young people, and how they are related to education, are difficult to identify and plan for very far ahead, depending as they do upon the evolution of the means of production (related to the demand for more or less qualified manpower to operate the capital involved), the demand for goods and services, the rhythm of economic development and, essentially, upon the improvement of the employment situation. The recognition that forecasting the timing and magnitude of changes in these elements is most hazardous makes it all the more necessary to build into planning the capacity to cope with uncertainty.

C. Educational developments vis-à-vis new problems in the allocation and use of financial and manpower resources

A number of Member countries have adopted policies in favour of investments, limiting public and private consumption, together with policies aimed at a balanced budget and at reductions in public spending, all tending to restrict the growth of public expenditure on education. The high proportion of expenditure on personnel in current education expenses and the distribution of funds among the different levels of the education system create rigidities which limit the possibilities for budgetary restrictions. Such restrictions are in danger of compromising the quality of services, as of policy objectives, and of furnishing inadequate responses to new educational needs - pre-primary, remedial, adult. In some countries, the share of resources set aside for the training of unemployed youth so as to improve their chances in the labour market, though relatively increasing in a few cases, remains limited because of a lack of coordination between the administrative services concerned.

In some countries it is already the case that more young people have been training as teachers than for whom employment can now be found and this situation may become more widespread, even taking into account the increases in teacher-pupil ratios which may be necessary at various levels of the educational system. This will increasingly call for a re-definition of the modes of recruitment, training, utilisation and deployment of teachers and of the bases on which staffing ratios are established in relation to pupil groupings.

D. Social changes give rise to new educational needs

Strong social pressures are operating to modify and improve living and working conditions, to promote individual participation in all matters affecting conditions of living and working and to reduce social inequality as between groups and between regions. In the course of the next few years, a reduction in the length of working hours, together with earlier retirement, is to be expected; this will result in more leisure and will call for an extension of the scope of facilities to provide for new individual interests as well as an extension of social roles, notably at work (industrial democracy). The authorities will need to respond to all these aspirations and define appropriate aims for a social policy. The contribution made by education to these various social changes should be considerable. New "social qualifications" will be required to enable individuals to profit from the new possibilities opening out for them and to fulfil their aspirations. The function of education would have to be enlarged so as to make it possible for individuals and groups to obtain these qualifications. In particular, the concept of recurrent education provides a better chance now to extend such possibilities to the whole population.

II. RESPONSES OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

The objective of a return to full employment is essentially a first priority for economic and manpower policies. If educational measures cannot but marginally contribute to this return there is nonetheless a basic responsibility on the part of the education system to facilitate the entry of young people and adults into working life by providing both general and vocational education appropriate to modern needs; present unemployment has no more than revealed the existence of this permanent need. More specifically, policy makers have to consider the effects of educational services on the employment chances of the individuals, taking account of the special relations created by unemployment and underemployment or by the increased segmentation of the labour market, which are of a different character from those existing during past periods of full employment. They will have, for example, to ensure necessary changes in curricula and propose realistic opportunities for training (improvements in general education, granting of a "second chance", acquisition of a professional qualification, re-training) capable of mitigating the social consequences of unemployment and of increasing the social return on the resources allocated to the maintenance of financial assistance to the unemployed.

A. Effective performance by the educational system of the various social functions of education

The educational system will need to take into account much more than it did in the past the broader trends and changes which impinge upon it and be prepared to redefine its role in the context of its changing social and economic environment. A framework within which the education system should develop, together with its interdependence with other relevant agencies, would need to be defined in each Member country.

In many countries there may be need for a redefinition of the objectives of basic education, taking into account the need for an extended common educational experience for all children, the increased educational opportunities available outside the school, and the need to reduce existing inequalities between social and ethnic groups, regions and sexes. The function of education as an apprenticeship for social life and as fulfilment of the total capabilities of the individual, including the development of a propensity for participation in subsequent educational opportunities, must take its proper place along with the need for individuals to play their part in economic life.

At all levels the qualitative aspects of education remain a priority and new norms of quality may need to be adopted in response to the changing requirements of rapidly developing societies. Sufficiently flexible pedagogical objectives, held largely in common, should be formulated for basic education, to correspond to the different stages in children's development and socialisation. These objectives might be attained through a wide variety of programmes, methods and rhythms of progression adapted to the various groups of pupils. To bring this about a more active continuing training of teachers is necessary, together with use of compensatory programmes where special groups are concerned (e.g. students with handicapped conditions and students from low family income background). In this way, by providing all young people with a better basic preparation for social and active life in all its forms, the school could also overcome its failure to interest and motivate many groups of pupils and reduce the rate of drop-outs and repeaters.

B. Provision by the education system of increased opportunities for the development of skills and qualifications

By providing occupational qualifications, the education system has an important role to play in reducing the dangers which active members of the population, and in particular young people, find themselves facing in employment. All must thus be offered a chance to prepare for active life and to acquire marketable skills and qualifications; the numbers of those who at present leave the education

system with no valid qualifications need to be reduced. Priority would need to be given to qualifications of a reasonably general nature, not rigidly tied to one particular occupation, but facilitating movement between several. In some countries, the education system needs to develop effective responses to the growing need for occupational training and also for the provision of middle level qualifications. In most countries there is a need for measures to bring the education and training systems closer together.

A growing sphere of public responsibility, in conjunction with other agencies and groups concerned, is the improvement of the conditions prevailing at the time of transfer from school to active life and a reduction of the difficulties and dangers which assail the young during the process. This can be facilitated by:

i) diversifying post-compulsory studies and offering opportunities for a broad-based occupational or technical training;

ii) modifying the structures and processes of transfer from these courses to employment, by such means as apprenticeship schemes, "sandwich courses", part-time work and study, financial inducements for the young and for the firms which might employ them;

iii) ensuring, through the collaboration of relevant public agencies, that young people leaving school before the end of upper secondary education, receive assistance or support in entering working life comparable with that received by their contemporaries remaining within school.

All these stipulations are best incorporated in a highly flexible system of recurrent education, capable of sharing as equitably as possible among the different age-groups opportunities for access and return to education and employment. Within this framework, particular attention must be paid to special groups in order to protect and increase their opportunities and strengthen their position and role in society. This is particularly true for individuals who have been obliged to abandon their studies, and are thus specially vulnerable to unemployment but rarely motivated to resume their education.

The existence of higher and rising levels of instruction among the population as a result of educational expansion is an irreversible social fact. Arguments postulating an excess of qualifications are not convincing. Nevertheless, the consequences of this general raising of the level of education must be carefully envisaged. On the one hand, in the future, individuals may be required to reduce the professional expectations formerly linked to a certain level of education or to a particular degree or diploma, while educational institutions may have to offer more diversified and not too

specialised course programmes; on the other, employers will have to propose employment structures, working conditions, modes of participation and use of acquired skills which take into account and respond to the higher level of instruction acquired by their employees.

The concern over the change in employment and career chances for higher education graduates, while justified and necessary, bears the risk of becoming overly prominent in public concern, the media, and in policy considerations, to the detriment of other priority areas for educational and social policy. From the point of view of social ethics as well as in the interest of long-term economic and social development, the first priority for educational policy, together with meeting the basic demands of industry and the public sectors for highly qualified manpower, must lie with those at the bottom of the educational qualification scale, particularly at a time when that position means a high risk not only of underemployment, but of unemployment. It is on this principle also that a new priority for adult and recurrent education is founded. From the same social policy principle, together with the argument of the long-term needs of the highly developed economies facing a decline in the age groups entering the labour force, derives the idea of society's responsibility for providing all youth with a full vocational or professional qualification utilisable on the labour market, upon which their further education and retraining may build.

The trends and orientations outlined above will need to be increasingly reflected in the methods and scope of educational planning and management. This is an area in which technical and political issues are closely inter-related, and we have referred to these matters in the main body of our report.

We have indicated our continued concern for means to ensure the best possible allocation of educational resources, and the consequent need for greater insights in the relationships between ends and means in educational undertakings so as to facilitate more rational decisions in this field. We have warned, however, against too simplistic an approach to specific costing or accounting techniques and the dangers which the injudicious application of such approaches might have towards an undesirable degree of centralisation and a distortion of educational objectives. We have also referred to the need for greater devolution of decisions to local and institutional levels to facilitate a more intensive use of resources, including those available in the community, and to the need, in some countries, for a readaptation of rigid school timetables (rhythmes scolaires) so as to enrich and maximise the time which children spend at school. We have also underlined the need for capacity to facilitate the necessary redeployment of resources, both in equipment and personnel, resulting from cyclical variations in the school

population at each level of study; and have stressed the need for more coordinated approaches to the management of the global resources allocated to training, entry into working life, employment facilities for young people and income maintenance for unemployed youth.

On the broader question of educational planning, we have stressed the need for encouraging planning approaches based more on qualitative and policy, rather than technical, aspects. Planning must thus become increasingly sensitive to the aspirations, needs and problems of the various user groups and, in particular, of marginal groups. It should develop a capacity for identifying these factors and for integrating them with other technical aspects and quantitative objectives. Planners must be able to obtain rapidly detailed information on the changes which affect educational demand or choice; particular attention needs to be paid to factors which are sensitive to policy action (structural and institutional measures, information and orientation systems, school experience and "climate", financial incentives, etc.). Planning should envisage the development of a capacity for foreseeing problems and above all identifying key policy options so as to make it possible to evaluate changes in the different components of demand, analyse the relationship between individual, social and institutional factors, fully comprehend the role which education plays in the socio-economic context and in the day-to-day life of the individual.

Such approaches to planning would have to be related to the marked trend already observed in many countries of the decentralisation of the decision-making process to regional and local levels, greater management autonomy at the institutional level, and the selection of educational objectives and methods which would encourage more active cooperation between the school and the community. These approaches have of course to be developed within the governmental and administrative structures and traditions peculiar to each country. The aim would be to ensure coherent national education policy while, at the same time, maintaining a diversification of possibilities, of modes of participation and of means used to arrive at desired objectives. In such a context, it would be possible in each country, by means of a wide public debate, for global options for the long-term development of the education system to be defined and for a consensus of desired objectives to be reached. Such global options for the long-term development of the education system and its place in the kind of society that each country wishes to evolve could also provide the framework within which appropriate research, development and experimentation in education could be undertaken.

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